

CALENDAR

TODAY

Noisy Offering
Birthday/Anniversary Fellowship AFTER Special Meeting
Special Congregational Meeting Immediately Following Service
Monthly Council meeting to follow

Sun., Sept. 24	Sunday School	9:00 AM
	Worship	10:00 AM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to Amber Brueggen and Ethan Sebranek who were married yesterday, here at St. Paul's. The flowers on the altar are from the wedding.



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Wilton, WI

16th Sunday after Pentecost
September 17, 2023

**Inviting People to
Journey with Christ's Family
in Spreading God's Love and Mercy**

In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

****(Indicates that the people should stand as they are able.)***

Announcements

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be God,
the one who forms us,
✠ Jesus who bears the cross,
the Spirit who makes our joy complete.
Amen.

Let us bow before God in humility,
confessing our sin.
Steadfast and faithful God,
**you have revealed the ways of justice,
yet we fail to follow you.**

We are overwhelmed
by the world's violence and suffering.
We are afraid to risk what we have
for the sake of others.
For the harm we have caused,
known and unknown, forgive us.
For the unjust demands we place on others
and your creation, forgive us.
For the ways we turn away
from you and our neighbor, forgive us.
Lead us back to you
and set us on the right path;
in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.
Amen.

Beloved in Christ,
God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.
God's compassion is beyond compare.
In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.
In ☩ Christ, you are already and always forgiven.
Amen.

***Hymn "Praise My Soul, the God of Heaven" ELW #864**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
And the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

***KYRIE ELW p.184**

***Canticle of praise "Glory to God" ELW p.185**

Prayer of the Day

**O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

*Benediction

***Hymn "Goodness Is Stronger than Evil" ELW #721**

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. God is at work in you.
C: **Thanks be to God.**

THOSE SERVING TODAY

Ministers: All God's People; Pastor: Karen Sparling Organist: Nalani Bever; Reader: Lori Arndt.

IN THE MILITARY

Jacob Picha, Dylan Dougherty, Danelle Dougherty, Matthew Dutton, Robert Cale

IN OUR PRAYERS

Gloria Meltesen, Darlene Babbitt, Judy Bever, Craig King, Mary Leis, Tracie Herman, Dave Dechant, Jayden Shea, Erin Long, Sandra Lamb, Roger O'Gara, Barb Delong Nofsinger.

Sue Domke Dyal was laid to rest, yesterday, at St. Paul's Cemetery. Sue was the daughter of Harold and Billie Domke and sister to Mary and Edith. May God comfort and strengthen them during this difficult time.

Sermon

Reverend Karen Sparling

Hymn

“Our Father, We Have Wandered”

ELW #606

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION** (Merciful God, receive our prayer.)

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

***Offertory Hymn** “Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil” ELW #512

***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Let us pray,

God of power, God of plenty,

all things belong to you.

**We bring your gifts to the table,
that all might be fed.**

**Form us into the body of your Beloved,
Jesus Christ, our Savior.**

Amen.

***LORD’S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

After Jacob’s death the brothers of Joseph begged for forgiveness for the crime they had done against him. You intended to do me harm, Joseph said, but God used this as an opportunity to do good and save many lives.

Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph’s brothers said, “What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?” ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, “Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷‘Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.’ Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father.” Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, “We are here as your slaves.” ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalms 103:8-13

⁸**LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**
⁹you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.
¹⁰**You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

¹²**As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

¹³As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

SECOND READING

This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.

Romans 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW p. 188

When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.

The holy gospel according to Matthew 18:21-35

Glory to you, O God.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ.**